



# Preserving Our Heritage

## A Property Owner's Guide to the East Weatogue Historic District

### Welcome to the East Weatogue Historic District!

The Simsbury Historic District Commission was established in 1987. The district aids in preserving the historic and unique character of the East Weatogue area. The Commission has developed this guide in hopes of providing Historic District residents with a clear understanding of the process for applying to the Historic District Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness. We hope you will find the following information useful. ❖



### HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Dianne L. Mead Chairman	Marguerite Rodney Vice Chairman
Elizabeth Woollacott Secretary	Denise Alfeld Member
Jonathan Laschever Alternate	Marc Lubetkin Alternate
Mark Nyquist Alternate	

### Questions & Answers

#### What is the Historic District Commission?

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is an eight-member commission of volunteers appointed for three-year terms by the Board of Selectmen. The Commission normally consists of five regular members and three alternate members

#### How often does the Commission meet and what is the application process?

The HDC meets on the first Thursday of the month in the Town Hall Main Meeting Room at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury. Applications are available in the Planning and Land Use Department.

The necessary information to be submitted depends on the nature of the project and may include the following: a plot plan; architectural drawings; samples of materials, such as siding and manufacturer's cut sheets for windows, doors, fences, etc.

After your completed application form and any of the necessary information has been submitted and reviewed by the staff, it will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the HDC.

The Commission must advertise any scheduled public hearing in a newspaper having substantial local circulation at least once, not more than 15 and not less than 5 days before the public hearing. The abutting property owners within 100 feet of the property lines will be notified by mail of your application.

The Commission meeting consists of two parts: a public hearing and a public meeting. During the public hearing, you will have the opportunity to present your proposal. Members of the public are allowed to speak in favor or in opposition of your application. During the public meeting, Commission members will discuss your proposal and vote on it.

All meeting minutes are available for public review on the town's website at <http://simsbury-ct.gov> or in the Town Clerk's Office.

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### **How long does the process take?**

The application will be considered officially received as of the date of the next regular meeting of the Commission. The Commission will schedule a public hearing and render a decision no later than 65 days after the official receipt of the application. Please note that a “Certificate of Appropriateness” is valid for one year.

Once the application is approved, a “Certificate of Appropriateness” will be issued to the applicant and a copy will be filed with the Building Department. You will need to record your copy with the Town Clerk’s Office before a building permit will be issued and work can begin.

### **What should I do if after starting work, I realize that changes need to be made to my approved proposal?**

You will need to have your “Certificate of Appropriateness” amended. The Planning & Land Use Office will assist you in this process. Depending on the nature of the change, your request may or may not require an additional meeting with the Commission.

### **What may I do if I don’t understand or disagree with the HDC’s decision?**

If the Commission denies the application, written notice will be sent to the applicant and the Building Official, along with an explanation of why the application was denied. The Historic District Commission may decide to approve an application with additional stipulations. If the applicant does not wish to implement these stipulations, the applicant may reapply with a modified design proposal or may appeal the Commission’s decision in Superior Court. Please call Howard Beach, Zoning and Conservation Compliance Officer, at (860) 658-3240 for information and an explanation of the decision.

### **Tips on Submitting an Application**

- Meet informally with the Commission to get feedback on your proposal.
- Decide on as many of the details of your proposal as possible. Know what type of materials you will use and how the finished project will look.
- Submit visual examples of your plans as part of your application. Plot plans, elevation drawings, line drawings, photographs, cut sheets, and architect’s drawings are all critical in helping the Commission understand your proposal.
- Bring to the public hearing your visual examples and, if available, a current photograph of the building.

### **What type of work requires a “Certificate of Appropriateness” from the Historic District Commission?**

Any physical alteration to the exterior of a structure, construction of a new structure, or demolition of an existing structure that is visible from a public way (street or sidewalk) requires a “Certificate of Appropriateness” from the Historic District Commission.

The Building Official will require a “Certificate of Appropriateness” approved by the Historic District Commission before issuing a building permit for any construction activity in the East Weatogue Historic District unless either the Historic District Commission or the Building Official certifies in writing that a proposed construction activity is not regulated under the city’s Historic District Commission ordinance. Moreover, a “Certificate of Appropriateness” may be required whether or not a building or zoning permit is also required.

Examples of modifications that would require a “Certificate of Appropriateness” include, but are not limited to:

- Masonry replacement and re-pointing.
- Building additions, including rooms, roofed porches, dormers, skylights, chimneys, and outbuildings.
- Temporary or permanent addition to the dwelling, accessory buildings, or site improvements, such as: fences; walls; walks; steps; driveways; parking areas; satellite dishes; TV antennae; solar panels; permanent signs; pools; patios; decks; outbuildings; and outdoor lighting fixtures.
- The addition, removal, or replacement of any architectural detail or ornament.
- Any construction, alteration, or enlargement to driveways or parking areas, walkways, walls, and patios.
- Any partial or entire window, storm window, door, and storm door modification, or replacement, except for exact replacement.
- The addition, removal, or replacement of window shutters.
- Extensive or total replacement of any siding or roofing materials, whether similar to or different than the original.

